GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1523
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2017
e-Commerce Market
Patel Shri Subhash;Reddy Shri Y. S. Avinash;Shiyal Dr. Bharati Dhirubhai

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the e-commerce market is growing in the country at the desirable rate if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether instances of irregularities in the functioning of e-commerce have come to the notice of the Government;
(c) if so, the details of the remedial action taken by the Government to remove such irregularities;
(d) whether it is a fact that online vendors are requesting the Government to set up a Regulator for e-commerce, if so, the details thereof; and
(e) whether the Government has taken any decision on the matter, the details thereof ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) : No study in this regard has been conducted.

(b) & (c) : The Government receives suggestions/ grievances on various issues in different sectors including e-commerce sector. The same are considered by the Government in consultations with stakeholders including Ministries/ Departments, State Governments, apex industry chambers and other organizations and necessary amendments, if required, are made in the policy from time to time.

The Competition Commission of India has received four cases relating to the e-commerce sector, but the commission has not found any competition issue in these cases. Accordingly they have been closed at the prima facie stage.

Complaints regarding e-commerce received at the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) are referred to the companies for redressal. In some cases, consumers are advised to file complaints in the appropriate Consumer Forum for redressal.

The Consumer Protection Act, 1986, has been enacted to better protect the interests of the consumers. It covers all goods and services and all mode of transactions including e-commerce. Under the provision of said Act, a three tier quasi-judicial mechanism, called Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission/ Forum, has been set up at the district, State and National levels to provide simple, quick and inexpensive redressal to consumer disputes.

(d) & (e): E-commerce activities are governed by number of Regulations/Acts of the Government like the Shop and Establishment Act, Sales of Goods Act, Companies Act, Income Tax Laws, Information Technology Act, the Competition Act, the Consumer Protection Act, etc.

A Committee has been constituted to examine various issues relating to e-commerce under the Chairmanship of CEO, NITI Aayog. The Committee inter-alia comprises representatives from Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Electronics & Information Technology, Department of Consumer Affairs and certain State Governments namely Assam, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Punjab.

The Consumer Protection Bill, 2015, already introduced in Parliament, seeks to provide for establishment of a Central Consumer Protection Authority to look into, inter alia, unfair trade practices and take remedial action.

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